

NPSMA

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NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL SCIENCE MASTER'S ASSOCIATION
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NPSMA Board of Directors Holds Retreat in Worcester, MA



Liz Friedman taking notes at the board of directors' retreat

During the final weekend in March, Worcester Polytechnic hosted the NPSMA bi-annual board of directors' meeting. President Bogdan Vernescu kicked off the event by presenting a "state of the association" address in which he highlighted how quickly NPSMA has developed since its inception last summer.

Vice President Ursula Bechert and Executive Director Stephen Lemire led the board through the completion of NPSMA's strategic plan and laid the groundwork for the business plan which will complete the roll-out of membership services over the course of this year.

Finally, the board interviewed marketing and consulting specialists in an effort to contract with a firm that will help develop promotional material, not only for the NPSMA, but also for its member institutions.

Universities Include PSM Development in their Vision Statements

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is one of a handful of universities that are specifically mentioning PSM development in their strategic plans. In March, 2007 the university's strategic goals for academic excellence listed the initiative to "Develop professional master's programs in areas of pressing need."

Also, Dennis Berkey, President of WPI included in his 2007 vision statement that one of his goals in graduate education is "Preparing students for the fruitful applications of the core disciplines through professional MS degree programs."

If PSM development is included in your university's strategic plan, please forward a copy to Stephen Lemire slemire@npsma.org so that we may begin to catalogue these forward-thinking statements about PSM's.

"Develop professional master's programs in areas of pressing need."

"Preparing students for the fruitful applications of the core disciplines through professional MS degree programs;"

“PSM’s seem to follow the snowflake principle. If you’ve seen one PSM, then you’ve only seen one PSM.”

Stephen Lemire at the MAGS meeting

NPSMA Participates in Regional Graduate School Meeting

On April 4 in St. Louis, the NPSMA participated in a program for PSM program directors and deans which was held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Midwest Association of Graduate Schools (MAGS). The event was coordinated by the Council of Graduate Schools and included nearly two dozen representatives from universities in the region.

NPSMA President Bogdan Vernescu provided a brief history of the NPSMA along with a more detailed overview of NPSMA’s short-term and long-term objectives. Executive Director Stephen Lemire presented an overview of research and anecdotal findings of existing and planned PSM programs. Included in this presentation was the first release of preliminary data from NPSMA’s Best Practices Survey. Lemire stated that the NPSMA was very pleased with the survey response rate (more than 50%) and will be continuing to follow up with PSM programs that had not fully completed their surveys. Over the next couple months, the NPSMA will begin releasing detailed reports to its membership and summary findings to other interested parties.

The highlight of the MAGS session was a lively presentation and discussion led by NPSMA Vice President Ursula Bechert. Dr. Bechert provided an overview of the PSM experience at Oregon State University and facilitated dialogue around issues related to PSM development and sustainability. The session concluded with participants suggesting topics for breakout sessions to be held at the NPSMA annual conference in November.

NPSMA Represented at University-Industry National Meeting

Ursula Bechert and Stephen Lemire represented the NPSMA at a national conference of the University Industry Demonstration Partnership (www.uidp.org) last week at the Kauffman Foundation in Kansas City. The UIDP is an initiative designed to improve collaboration between industry and universities primarily around research initiatives.

The NPSMA is interested in pursuing a relationship with the UIDP in areas where we have a common interest such as innovations to graduate education, namely the PSM, and partnerships with industry, nonprofits, and government agencies.

Resources Available for PSM Programs

The NPSMA Alumni Network, under the direction of Alaina Levine, continues to be very active in providing career opportunities and professional development for PSM graduates. The most recent resource which they have forwarded to the NPSMA main office is information about the website SPIEWorks www.spieworks.com. You may be interested in checking out this site for potential employment and internship opportunities for your students in areas such as nanotechnology, photonics, and optics.

The NPSMA recently participated in a Biotechnology and Bioengineering Career Fair at WPI. Please call the NPSMA office if you would like to receive the contact information of students wishing to know more about PSM's in these disciplines.



Stephen Lemire making a point at the recent board retreat

SAVE THE DATE!

THE NPSMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13 AND FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14 AT THE GEORGIA TECH HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER IN ATLANTA.

DETAILED INFORMATION WILL FOLLOW IN THIS PUBLICATION, ON OUR WEBSITE, AND ALSO UNDER SEPARATE COVER.



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